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LB 352

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, for those of you who have seen "Star Wars", you may understand what I mean. This morning I feel a disturbance in the force. Something is wrong here. I see no reason for us to fall away from the support we gave to this bill the last time it was before us. Those of you who have never been a part of a group which has been set aside and treated as somehow less than everybody else fail to understand what it means to have people who are sensitive to your problems addressing those problems; the common cliché is somebody who speaks my language. Were I able to speak only Spanish or French or German, no matter how sympathetic a person, who speaks only English, might be, there could never be complete or even effective communication between me and that person. So it would be preposterous to have somebody who does not understand me at all being the one who is to express for me what I face in the way of a problem, or to fashion what is needed as a solution. Even were I to close my eyes that does not tell me what it means to be blind, because as soon as I chose to I can open them again. I will always be able to see, no matter how long I close my eyes and stumble around in the dark saying, I'm going to do what a blind person or one who is seeing impaired does in order that I can say now I have experience and I understand. Brothers and sisters, it goes a lot deeper than that. There is a societal attitude and there are deep-rooted problems that go beyond how much money this bill is going to cost in terms of the discussion that has gone on this morning. If you listen to Senator Tyson you will see that he has taken the position that he often does, where the only concern is money. The people who are to be served are just the fodder for the program, but the program does not exist for them; they exist for the program. I would not be proud to say I had anything to do with fashioning that monstrosity known as the Department of Health and Human Services. I opposed the amalgamation and conglomerating of these various agencies and departments into this totally unmanageable, totally incompetently run monstrosity. This body, as Senator Lynch pointed out, is continuing, not only to expend money of the taxpayers, but to suffer sanctions at the hands of the federal government due to incompetency. And now we're coming to a group of people who have pointed out that, when it comes to employment, the rate of employment provision is low in Nebraska.